

POLITICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

289

Mein Kawpfis a curious mixture of idealism and fanaticism, sanity and rant. The first thing that strikes the reader is that it is the work of an ill-educated man, stuffed with undigested fragments of knowledge. Swallowing the fantastic nonsense of Gobineau and Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Hitler bases the community of his dreams on the conception of racial purity. The Aryans, he tells us, are the builders of civilization, the Jews its destroyers. When he speaks of the Jews, to whom he denies all virtues and all rights, he raves like a lunatic. Next to keeping the blood-stream pure comes the exaltation of country over town. Blood and soil! he cries. Let the maximum number of German citizens till the earth! He detests the life of the cities with their moral and intellectual temptations. In the noisy factories, the overcrowded tenements, the stuffy beer-houses, men talk, speculate, criticise, fall a prey to Socialist and Communist agitators. Let them live in the open air, in contact with nature, where there is room to breathe and to multiply!

The third article is the doctrine of leadership, the guidance of the nation by a representative man instead of by transient Chancellors and dissolving coalitions. A steady course, he argues, can only be pursued when a single unchallengeable will is in control, acting in the interests of the nation but without asking its permission before decisions are taken. All parties in consequence must disappear except that to which the Leader belongs, and minorities must hold their tongue. In the interest of national strength the individual must give way to the state. Children must be brought up to profess the opinions of the Leader, whatever their parents may say. The place of woman is in the home, her duty to have the maximum number of healthy children. Finally he summons his countrymen, when they have

regained their armed strength and secured an ally, to strike down France, the deadly enemy, as a preliminary to the march into Southern Russia. When the book was written he had no wish for colonies overseas : what he desired was new territory in Europe, " where the German peasant can breed children.* The duty of diplomacy was to prepare the way for the titanic struggle on which the future of the nation depended. There is no trace of the animosity against the Churches which he displayed after his accession to power, though it is clearly revealed in Rauschning's *Hitler speaks*.

No more explosive work has appeared since Marx's *Capital*^ and all other political apologias taken together have not enjoyed the circulation or the influence of *Mezxx Kampf*. Millions